

his life, and himself, and we, the inhabitants of the brighter fields of Nature and mind, still inherit in our blood some taint of this contempt for everyday matters.

PROFOUND INTERPRETATIONS.—He who has interpreted a passage in an author "more profoundly" than was intended, has not interpreted the author but has obscured him. Our metaphysicians are in the same relation, or even in a worse relation, to the text of Nature. For, to apply their profound interpretations, they often alter the text to suit their purpose—or, in other words, corrupt the text. A curious example of the corruption and obscuration of an author's text is furnished by the ideas of Schopenhauer on the pregnancy of women. "The sign of a continuous will to life in time," he says, "is copulation; the sign of the light of knowledge which is associated anew with this will and holds the possibility of a deliverance, and that too in the highest degree of clearness, is the renewed incarnation of the will to life. This incarnation is betokened by pregnancy, which is, therefore frank and open, and even proud, whereas copulation hides itself like a criminal." He declares that every woman, if surprised in the sexual act, would be likely to die of shame, but "displays her pregnancy without a trace of shame, nay even with a sort of pride." Now, firstly, this condition cannot easily be displayed . more aggressively than it displays itself, and when